



SOCIAL CHANGE IN ANITA DESAI'S NOVEL, "CRY, THE PEACOCK"

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ABSTRACT

Woman feels lonely in the face of vast external world. Her loneliness is intensified when she feels the sense of belonging nowhere. The cruelty of time can also be a cause of frustration. Frustration has been highlighted in modern literature on account of certain factors like urbanization, the dehumanization etc. that changed woman's attitude. Indo-Anglian writers emphasize the frustration of major characters and the grief resulting from their frustration. The woman in their novels was frustrated before universe. The grave problem is that the conditions of practical life arouse in woman a sense of frustration. Hence frustration is a predicament element in Indo-Anglian. The term such as frustration, isolation, alienation and loneliness is synonymously used in this paper. Yet, they are different from each other as they depict woman's different mental reactions and physical conditions. Psychologists refer to an extraordinary variety of psycho-social disorders, including frustration, loss of self-status, despair rootlessness, loss of beliefs or values. In short, frustration is a feeling of being alienated from others.

KEYWORDS: Modern Literature, Woman's Attitude, Practical Life, Psycho-Social Disorders

INTRODUCTION

This paper will explain the object and relevance of literary works of Indo-Anglian writer, Anita Desai in relation to the changed woman's attitude. Anita Desai shows that woman is frustrated socially and psychologically. She pines for liberty, status as well as pleasure. But she remains aloof from these expectations. After so many struggles, she gets anything like man. For these expectations she went through many predicaments in her life. Woman's predicament arises when she runs after liberty, status as well as desires and thus frustration by society, family and fellow beings. As they don't gain what they expect, they become failures and frustrated being and they meet the end.

In the novel, 'Cry, the Peacock' Maya pined for liberty, but met the despair. Maya's neurosis denotes a collective neurosis which tries to shatter the very identity of woman in our contemporary society dominated by man in which woman longing for love is driven mad or compelled to commit suicide. Even after of years struggle, the woman has not really succeeded in possessing a distinct identity. Women are successfully career who manages both the public and private spheres efficiently. The writer's philosophy presents various betrayals like betraying the whole womanhood self-betrayal or betrayal of the community to which one belongs. It presents the terrible consequences of such betrayal.

OBJECTIVES

Keeping in view the objective, the women predicament will be studied in detail from Indo-Anglian writer Anita Desai's novels as women's frustration in nature, in society, in family and self as well. Being more rooted in the Indian tradition the importance of the social institutions is accentuated again and

again. In reality, women lead a life of the conformity either out of personal choice or out of compulsion. Women want liberation from the glossy and attractive trapping of womanhood, since they have experienced the limited space within the trap. This is not peculiar to the Indian woman. It is a condition prevalent all over the globe. In spite of much struggle, women even in the West can hardly claim to be liberated. Woman is confused between idea and action. For the majority of Indian women it is a question of sheer survival. The patriarchal system affects both urban and rural women in different ways. Both women are victims of feudal and patriarchal structures and norms. Her attitude for status as well as pleasure throws her into adverse action. She revolted and struggled for acquiring status in the society.

METHODOLOGY

As far as the methodology has been concerned the critical material will be used apart from the original text. The relevant literature be collected and studied according to the social change. The protagonist Maya meets the human predicament that is the philosophy of existential predicament demonstrate their affirmation of the philosophy. Anita Desai ably explores the turbulent emotional world of the neurotic protagonist Maya who starts under an acute alienation, stemming from material discord and verges on a curious insanity. Maya is described to be almost totally deranged naturally required to be related by someone else. The changing concepts of morality have not only revolutionized our attitudes to the prostitutes who are now seen as victims of the socio-economic forces.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Anita Desai successfully tunnels into the chaotic world of Maya's consciousness. The novel revolves around the married

life of Maya and Gautama that shatters because the two are not only temperamentally different but mutually opposed. Maya wants to enjoy life to the utmost and to her sexual satisfaction is a must and total denial of it makes her neurotic. Daughter of a wealthy father, Maya is married to Gautama who is very senior to her age, a friend of her father. Maya is interested in nature, in poetry and dance and also in the life of birds and animals. On the other hand Gautama is a dry and prosaic personality. He looks at Maya's love for the good things as sentimentalism and is indifferent to the beautiful things around him. Like Maya peacock are the creatures of exotic wild. For Maya peacock represent the struggle for survival. The Cry of the peacock is simply a symbol. In this novel, Anita Desai has depicted the failure of marriage between Maya and Gautama. She is the pioneer of the psychological novel in modern Indian English literature. Female characters are dominant in her novels and here she externalizes the interior of Maya's psyche.

The times have bought down the status of women to a stage that they are more or less second class citizens in this divine land. The panegyrics sung in their praise all seem hypocrite. Like any other backward country it too is a country of male superiority. Even in the most highly educated family girls are looked down upon and are considered a burden on the family. They are discriminated and are shown less favour than their privileged brothers. It seems strange but is true all the same that the torture and murder of females starts not during their rearing up as children or after their marriage but even before their birth. Although the constitution provides equal rights to women, and there are laws against dowry and rape, their execution is very poor. The rural poor women, even today are at the mercy of landlords, moneylenders and petty officials. Flesh trade belongs to almost all regions of the country. Some of the open prostitute markets in various parts are controlled by mafias who pay rent of the land to the corporation. They are worse even than the domestic animals in the family. The society is meant to be the most vital support system of a human being. Norms of society itself has victimized and endangered the very existence of female child. What we observe that the patriarchal value of gender preference, assigning differential status to the male and the female children in the family's social hierarchy, giving great importance to the materialistic value of marriage, lower age at marriage for girl menace of dowry, attempt to control family size have now come much closer to each other in playing the joint role in promoting higher incidence of female infanticide and dowry as well. Violence against women as any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, psychological or sexual harm or suffering to a woman, including threats of such acts whether occurring in public or private life. Thus rape, kidnapping, murder, wife battering, sexual abuse, eve teasing are all examples of violence against women. Sexual harassment is an integral part of women's routine. It is the most disturbing, threatening from violence against women.

CONCLUSION

Woman feels lonely in the face of vast external world. Her loneliness is intensified when she feels the sense of belonging nowhere. The cruelty of time can also be a cause of frustration. Being more rooted in the Indian tradition the importance of the

social institutions is accentuated again and again. In reality, women lead a life of conformity either out of personal choice or out of compulsion. Women want liberation from the glossy and attractive trapping of womanhood, since they have experienced the limited space within the trap. This is not peculiar to the Indian woman. It is a condition prevalent all over the globe. In spite of much struggle, women even in the West can hardly claim to be liberated. Woman is confused between idea and action. For the majority of Indian women, it is a question of sheer survival. The patriarchal system affects both urban and rural women in different ways.

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